

1.2a Safeguarding Children - Whistle-blowing policy

Statement of intent

It is our intention that staff working at Layston Preschool and Nursery CIC feel confident about coming forward and reporting any issues/concerns that they may have regarding the areas documented below, whilst remaining protected from any subsequent discrimination.

Aims:

- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities and feel confident in raising and reporting a serious concern at the earliest opportunity
- Provide avenues for staff to raise concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Ensure that staff receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied
- Reassure staff that they will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if they have made any disclosures in good faith

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishing to raise a concern can report without this leading to any harassment or victimisation, and every effort will be made to keep both the concern and the member of staff's identity confidential

What should be reported?

- The inappropriate treatment or care of a child
- Any breach in the behaviour of the Leader, staff, student or volunteer
- Discrimination of any kind
- Concerns that could impact on the health and safety of the children or adults

Procedures:

- a concern can be initially raised by any staff member to their Leader. If this is not possible, then report your concerns to the Trustees.
- Discuss the nature of the concern together with the background, history of the concern and provide the relevant dates of incidents.
- There is no expectation that staff prove beyond doubt the truth of their suspicion; however they will need to demonstrate that they are acting in good faith and there are reasonable grounds for their concern.
- All employees will be treated fairly.

Concerns will be dealt with in the following way:

- Initial enquiries will be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and if so what form it should take.
- The incident will be investigated by the Leader and/or Trustees and/or LADO/ Ofsted Lead/NSPCC
- If appropriate it will be referred and put through established Safeguarding children procedures and may form the subject of an independent inquiry
- Within ten working days of a concern being raised, the member of staff will receive in writing:
 - Acknowledgment that the concern has been received
 - An indication as to how the matter will be dealt with.

- Inform the member of staff concerned as to whether any further investigation will take place and if not, why not.

If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the setting disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

If there are any difficulties experienced as a result of raising a concern, support will be offered. Staff will be kept informed, of the progress and outcome of any investigation to assure that any disclosure has been properly addressed unless legal reasons determine otherwise

Confidentiality will be maintained and every effort will be made not to reveal a member of staff's identity if they so wish. If however a member of staff makes an allegation frivolously maliciously or for personal gain, appropriate action, that could include disciplinary action, will be taken.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a line manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to the Director/ LADO. (01992 555420) Please see the Herts CC Professional's Referral Form to LADO

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 seeks to protect employees from discrimination as a result of 'blowing the whistle' on their organisation, or individuals within it, through amendments to employment law.